

NCDOT Rail Division

The Rail Report



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919-707-4700

July/August 2021

Short Line Railroad Grants Awarded



Twelve short line railroads and the North Carolina Ports Authority will soon be making improvements to their rail infrastructure thanks to approximately \$10.2 million in matching grant funds being awarded as part of the N.C. Department of Transportation's Freight Rail and Rail Crossing Safety Improvement program (FRRCSI).

FRRCSI supports rail infrastructure health, safety and performance throughout the state, enabling NCDOT to partner with rail companies on improvement projects to move freight more effectively. This partnership helps railroads meet customer needs efficiently and in cost-effective ways while preparing them for growing service demands and partnerships with new businesses and industries.

The grant funds contribute to nearly \$20.4 million (total including funds from those below) in rail infrastructure improvements statewide.

Funds awarded are as follows:



Aberdeen and Rockfish \$390,000 for a project to modernize rail bridges in Cumberland County



Great Smoky Mountains Railroad \$1,922,000 for a project to upgrade railroad track and bridges, and raise the track bed to prevent washouts in Jackson and Swain counties



Alexander Railroad Company \$750,000 for two projects to improve track, railroad crossings and expand truck/rail transload operations in Alexander County



Laurinburg and Southern Railroad \$1,000,000 to improve track and switches in Scotland County



Atlantic and Western Railway \$430,000 for a project to upgrade track and switches in Lee County



North Carolina and Virginia Railroad \$747,000 for upgrades to siding tracks in Bertie and Northampton counties



Blue Ridge Southern Railroad \$4,506,000 for four projects to upgrade track, railroad crossings and bridges in Haywood, Buncombe, Henderson and Jackson counties



North Carolina State Ports Authority \$1,411,000 for two projects to provide rail upgrades and install radiation scanners necessary for transporting intermodal containers via rail at the Port of Wilmington in New Hanover County



Carolina Coastal Railway \$2,196,000 for a project to increase low train speeds by improving bridges and track in Wake, Nash, Johnston, Wilson, Greene, Pitt, Beaufort, Washington and Martin counties



RJ Corman Railroad Company \$2,484,000 to upgrade crossings and track in Columbus County, NC and Horry County, SC



Chesapeake & Albemarle Railroad \$1,865,000 for two projects to upgrade railroad track and improve bridges in Currituck and Camden counties, and construct a transload facility with upgraded turnouts in Pasquotank County



Wilmington Terminal Railroad \$1,191,000 to upgrade track in New Hanover County



Yadkin Valley Railroad \$1,500,000 to upgrade track, switches and bridges in Forsyth, Stokes, Surry and Wilkes counties



The Freight Rail and Rail Crossing Safety Improvement Program was established in 2013 by the General Assembly.

Nick Konen named New Operations and Facilities Manager

Nick Konen joined the Rail Division as Operations and Facilities Manager. Nick comes to us from Jacobs Engineering where he was the group lead for land development. He previously worked in several roles with Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway, including Director of Economic Development, Manager of Engineering for Intermodal and Automotive Facilities, and Manager of Public Projects. Nick is a Professional Engineer and holds a degree in Civil Engineering from the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, and an MBA from the University of Texas.



Lena White Promoted to Rail Signals Engineer

Lena White has been promoted to Rail Signals Engineer in the Design and Construction Branch. With more than 26 years of experience with the NCDOT, Lena has been a valued member of the Rail Signals Unit for more than 18 years. Lena has been instrumental in the development of the design processes within the Rail Signal Unit and we look forward to her continued contributions to Rail Division.



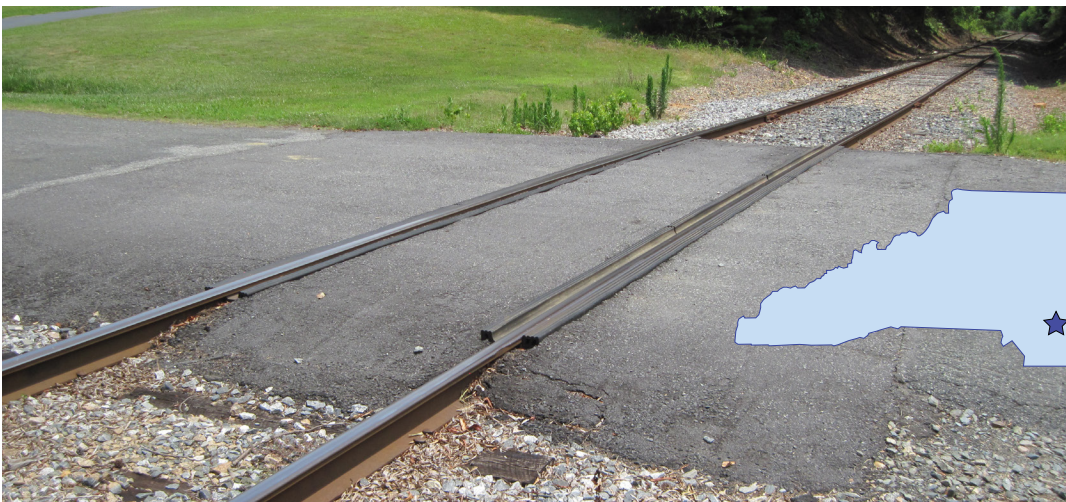
Ben Dawes named new Senior Rail Design Engineer for Design and Construction Branch

Ben Dawes joined the Rail Division as Senior Rail Design Engineer within the Design and Construction Branch. Ben began his career with Moffat Nichol before moving on to AECOM where he served in a review and coordination capacity for public projects for a Class 1 railroad, in addition to other duties. Ben is a registered Professional Engineer in North Carolina and holds a degree in Civil Engineering from the University of Delaware.



Cabarrus County Crossing Improved

Our featured crossing this month is on the Aberdeen Carolina & Western Railroad in Cabarrus County located on Ramble Road near Midland. NCDOT Division 10 Cabarrus County Maintenance assisted the Aberdeen Carolina and Western Railroad and the NCDOT Rail Division. The original timber and asphalt crossing had deteriorated, creating a rough crossing. The new asphalt and rubber rail seal crossing provides a safer and smoother ride for local drivers.





It's time for football! Get on board the train with other fans on the way to Carolina Panthers games and skip the hassle of traffic and parking.

Back by popular demand, NC By Train is hosting its football trains to carry fans to and from select home games in Charlotte.

On game day, arrive in Charlotte on *Piedmont* train 73 at 9:40 a.m. with plenty of time to enjoy the area around Bank of America Stadium before the 1 p.m. kickoff. Passengers can take their time and enjoy post-game fun before making their way back to the Amtrak station for a 7 p.m. departure on train 78.

Tickets are available online. Please note, face coverings are required in train stations and on board.

2021 SCHEDULE

- Sept. 12: New York Jets
- Sept. 19: New Orleans Saints
- Oct. 10: Philadelphia Eagles
- Oct. 17: Minnesota Vikings
- Nov. 7: New England Patriots
- Nov. 21: Washington Football Team
- Dec. 12: Atlanta Falcons
- Dec. 26: Tampa Bay Buccaneers

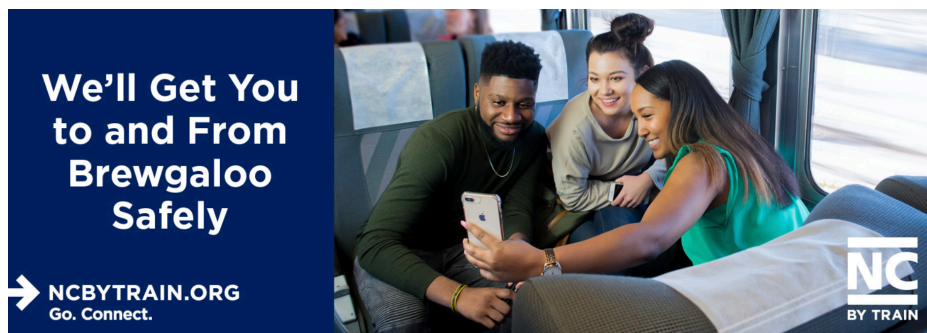
Headed to Brewgaloo in Raleigh? Travel Safely with NC By Train.

If you're going to the [Brewgaloo craft brewery festival](#) in Raleigh on Saturday, Sept. 18, there's a safe and fun way to get there by taking NC By Train.

With four daily round trips and [seven stations](#) between Raleigh and Charlotte, there's a schedule for everyone. Raleigh Union Station is just blocks away from the festival.

[Click here to view schedules](#) for the *Piedmont* and *Carolinian* trains.

Due to COVID-19, face coverings are required to be worn in train stations and onboard trains.



Schedule Ideas

Ride *Carolinian* 80 (departing Charlotte at 6:45 a.m.) and arrive in Raleigh at 10:05 a.m.; depart at 5:33 p.m. on *Carolinian* 79 and arrive in Charlotte at 8:59 p.m.

Ride *Piedmont* 74 (departing Charlotte at 10:30 a.m.) and arrive in Raleigh at 1:41 p.m.; stay overnight; return on *Piedmont* 75 departing Raleigh at 10 a.m., 77 departing at 3 p.m., or ride *Carolinian* 79 leaving at 5:33 p.m.



Sit Back & We'll Take You to the World of Bluegrass (Raleigh, Sept. 28-Oct. 2)

Trains are often featured in the lyrics of countless bluegrass songs, so what better way to experience [World of Bluegrass](#), the world's largest bluegrass festival, than to travel there by rail?

Board at any of the [seven stops](#) between Charlotte and Raleigh and get dropped off right by the festival at Raleigh's new Union Station.

Those traveling from the northeast can also board in New York, New Jersey, Philadelphia, D.C. and Virginia.

Due to COVID-19, face coverings are required to be worn in train stations and onboard trains.

[Book your tickets now](#), and save 15 percent.



Save 15 Percent on Travel to the N.C. Folk Festival

Looking for an easy way to get to the [N.C. Folk Festival](#) in Greensboro on Sept. 10-12? NC By Train can you get you there and help you save 15 percent on tickets!

Board at any of the [six stations](#) between Raleigh and Charlotte and arrive in downtown Greensboro. The train station is just minutes away from the festival.

The N.C. Folk Festival is a free, three-day celebration of cultural heritage featuring 300+ artists on multiple stages, a North Carolina Folklife area, children's activities, a makers marketplace, regional/ethnic foods and more.

Due to COVID-19, face coverings are required to be worn in train stations and onboard trains.

[Click here to save 15 percent on train tickets to the festival.](#)

CCX Construction Update, Rocky Mount



Construction is ongoing at the Carolina Connector (CCX) intermodal terminal in Edgecombe County. Work continues to finalize, test and commission the cranes. Last touches are being applied to lanes, parking, tracks and facility grounds as CSX, the Carolinas Gateway Partnership and NCDOT anticipate an October opening of the facility.



Spreader cabling for Crane 3 installed



Entry sign for Carolina Connector Terminal



Lane paving between tracks 2 and 3



Cars and containers on site for crane testing

Charlotte Gateway Station – Phase I Construction Update



Trade Street looking south toward the block that will be the primary station area for the City's mixed-use development



Grading of 4th Street egress tunnel and slope

The Rail Division is leading the planning, design and construction of Charlotte Gateway Station Phase 1. The City of Charlotte is progressing the effort for Phase 2 with developer Gateway Partners for the large mixed use development and station. The Phase I project is targeted for completion in 2023. The scope includes building bridges to support passenger rail tracks, a center island level-boarding platform and concourse, plus railroad track and signals.

Charlotte Gateway Station – Phase I Construction Update (continued)



Pouring concourse deck platform south of 5th Street



Construction of concourse and tunnel between 4th and Trade streets